

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is John Whaley and I'm from Bridgeport.

I'm writing to you today to express my discontent with the governor's budget proposal.

Over the last two years, we have watched our educators, parents, and students navigate distance and hybrid learning during the global COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen the struggles they face, struggles that have only exacerbated the inequities within Connecticut's public school system. We know how difficult it has been for districts that do not have adequate resources to educate their students amid a pandemic, and we know that equitably funding our districts is critical to the success of our students and communities, now more than ever.

I'm very thankful that my district was able to use federal relief funds to give my child the best educational experience possible, given how uncertain and difficult these last two years have been. However, it's not enough to provide this kind of funding and these kinds of resources for just a couple of years; the State of Connecticut needs to provide our students with the funding and resources they need to be successful.

Unfortunately, Governor Lamont's proposed budget doesn't address the importance of continuing to fund our students by fully funding the ECS formula. If we want our children to maintain the quality of education that federal relief funds have provided, we absolutely need to fully fund the ECS formula as soon as possible, instead of waiting for it to be phased in.

I am urging you to reject the governor's proposed budget as it stands and consider the needs of our students as you craft a revised budget. It is past time we put them at the forefront of the conversation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Whaley